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## THE HOUSE WITH TWO FRONT DOORS.

BY ALICE CARY.

**T**WENTY-FIVE years ago there stood in a straggling village on the banks of the Ohio, an old house, with two doors, and a good many irregular windows in the front. Two clumsy chimneys of stone showed squattily above the steep red gables—the one for architectural effect, simply, the other the extension of a veritable flue, and from this last, a cloud of black smoke worked itself out, and after a little vain effort to keep itself up sagged toward the ground, for the air was heavy—the orange light rapidly blackening against the yellow moss on the tops of the western hills, and the evening coming in with the promise of a wet night.

The village was not at all picturesque; a great hill that extended as far as the eye could see, and the summit of which seemed almost to touch the sky, formed its back-ground, and completely shut out the view in that direction. It was not one of those poetic hills that are beautified with pasture-fields, shady trees, and flowery thickets—on the contrary its village-side was bare of vegetation, except, indeed, a scanty growth of stunted oaks, together with some thistles, and dwarf blackberry vines, which, in some sort, relieved its monotony of baked clay, cracked by the sunshine, and washed into deep gullies by the rain.

The village streets were still less attractive—unpaved for the most part—full of ruts where refuse soaked and rotted, and obstructed at all points with idle carts, coopers' stuff, heaps of shavings and the like. They had their share too, of stray cows and quarrelsome dogs, and were provided with mud-holes, at convenient distances, where swine with patches of bristles scalded off by the ill-natured housewives, took such ease as their nature loveth, and by grunting and squealing further provoked the wrath of their oppressors, for the hearts of women are not always so gentle as poets say, and if the truth be fairly spoken, are, I am afraid, no less accessible to induration than the faces with which hard fortune plays such terrible havoc. But notwithstanding the facts recorded, the town was not with-

out pretensions which no transient abider therein could gainsay, without disadvantage.

The clergyman's house, with its close-shut windows, carved portico, and gray garden wall, set round with austere and anti-mundane box—its gravelled walk, along which tall sunflowers baked their great cakes brown, together with the red brick meeting-house, with its solemn door yard of burial-ground where a thousand low head-stones shrugged their shoulders beneath the two or three grand monuments, were perhaps, the distinguishing ornaments of the place—the centre about which clustered the more exclusive piety—the evangelical pride so to speak, of the village folks.

The market-house, which was, in point of fact, a dismantled canal boat, set upon dry land, was also an object, not only of general interest, but one which kindled local admiration almost to enthusiasm. Real estate in this vicinity was estimated to have doubled its value in consequence of this "improvement," and two or three owners of lots thereabouts retired from business, and were thereafter clothed and fed, simply by virtue of the market-house. No one will be disposed to doubt this statement who has observed what a number of idlers a single grocery store or turnpike-gate will maintain. I once knew two able-bodied men to support themselves and their families on the merits of a cross-road—but this, perhaps, was an extreme case.

Then there was the squire's office, a diminutive lean-to of the corner dry goods store, in the official glory of which all ordinary considerations of right and morality sunk completely out of sight. The squire wore a weed on his white hat in memory of the lamented Mrs. Bigham, and this drew after him more than a third part of the feminine sympathy of the town, and was perhaps the basis of his popularity,—every unmarried woman felt as if that black band was an electric link between herself and the great squire, which might at any time be converted to a bond of perpetual union.

"The office," as it was called, was the habitual resort of the big academy boys—decayed pilots of river-boats, doctors' students, who jested about "subjects" and drew teeth for half-price—and, as may be inferred, the convocations of these learned disputants were not a little promotive of exclusive feeling in the neigh-

borhood. True, the legal prestige was somewhat marred by the fact that a poor shoemaker plied his trade in the rear of the magisterial office, but aristocracy did all it could in self-defence by suspending a curtain formed of musquito-net, between the bench of the obnoxious workman, and the arm-chair and mottled spittoon of the squire. Inadequate as the screen would seem, it required not even that to separate the young shoemaker, who was lame and melancholy, from the rude and boisterous frequenters of the official department, so that a more impenetrable stuff was not in the least necessary. He had been in the village a year, or more, and nobody knew anything about him except that he was a faithful and honest worker, and put himself in nobody's way, for he moved about quietly as a ghost, and with as little interest in the earth, apparently. He was known to the old woman with whom he boarded, as Peter Gilbraith, and to the other town's people, who knew him at all, as "Shoe Pete"—but whether called by one name or another elicited from him no indication of pleasure or displeasure. Nature had gifted him with eyes of wonderful beauty—hair that curled itself all the more gracefully for his careless management, and a smile of that strangely fascinating sort, that seems made up of mingled scorn and sweetness; but accident had dishonored his fair proportions by curtailing one leg of its rightful dimensions, which obliged him to walk with a stick, and gave to his shoulders a perpetual stoop.

Whether it were poverty or lameness, or both, that made him shrink from the little observation he excited, or whether misanthropy were a part of his nature, nobody knew, and very soon nobody cared—for in what way could "Shoe Pete," they argued, enhance the value of town-lots, or contribute to social pleasure? And true it is that his great sad eyes seemed to rebuke the spirit of mirth, and his smile made the beholder of it feel as if he were more than half desponded. His dress was careless (with the exception of the high-heeled shoe, which was neat in the extreme) not slovenly, however, and it bore always evidence of refinement, as did also his pale face, in spite of neglected hair and beard.

From sunrise till sunset his hammer was never still, and sometimes late into the night, even, its whack, whack, sounded upon the soft leather, so that it is not

strange that reports gradually went into circulation, that Shoe Pete was "laying up" money; nor that overtures towards his acquaintance began to be warmly pressed. He remained inaccessible, however, and was observed to walk with less stoop, and to show a bright indignant spot on either cheek, after some customer had been unusually condescending with him.

But whether the season was a busy one or not, the young shoemaker was never idle—his candle made the small window above his work-bench shine till midnight, and his leather apron was in requisition late and early. There was always a book or newspaper under his pillow, in the morning, his landlady reported, and this fact was accepted by her as presumptive evidence, that Peter Gilbraith was a great scholar, and though it may seem like a small beginning on which to found a reputation for scholarship, it was sufficient, and puzzling questions in geography and grammar began to be propounded to him by the young villagers when they came to have their feet measured. Nevertheless, the sun threw his last rays from the yellow moss on the tops of the western hills and sank completely out of sight on the evening upon which our story opens, and the shoemaker had never as yet, received the slightest recognition from the great Squire Bigsham. Is it very singular if he started and let fall his hammer, as the great man pulled his chair about so that he faced the musquito net curtain, and said with easy familiarity, and as if he were in the habit of addressing him every day—"You are a happy dog, Gilbraith—I almost wish I was a shoemaker instead of the public functionary I am!"

Gilbraith smiled, and took up his hammer.

"Let me see," continued the Squire, "how long have we been acquainted?"

"I have worked in your office about a year, sir."

"A year! Zounds! why it seems just t'other day you come!" He knew the time very well, but he wanted to make believe that he was surprised so much time should have elapsed without his having cultivated friendly relations with his excellent neighbor.

The shoemaker had resumed his hammer and his old expression of sad indifference.

The Squire went on: "Bless my soul! a year! I wouldn't a' believed any feller,

if he'd a tole me that, exceptin' you, yourself." He laid special stress on the *you*, as if he held the young man's veracity in high esteem.

The shoemaker smiled again at the implied compliment, but made no other acknowledgment.

The Squire was not to be thwarted, however—the news had come to his ears that morning, that Shoe Pete had actually purchased a lot adjoining the market-house, and paid a *hundred* dollars *down*, for the same! so he gathered up his feet and said—"Look-a-here now, did you ever see any man make a boot to fit a feller's foot like that?"

Gilbraith clutched his hammer, or it must have fallen again—the Squire had, of a verity, indicated that shoemakers were *men*, and at the same time had designated himself as a fellow! He was too proud to disparage another man's work, and said something to the effect that the boots seemed to have done good service.

"Well, sir, I'll tell you, sir," continued the Squire, bringing his courtesy to a climax, "I want you for to make me a pair of tip-top stogy boots, and you may jes put your own price onto 'em, too." The shoemaker said his time was fully engaged for a month or more, but that he would attend the order at his earliest convenience, and limping forward he took the requisite measure with the air of conferring, rather than of receiving a favor.

The customary loungers dropped in one after another, and each, after a little subdued talk with the Squire—the upshot of which was, it is reasonable to infer, the prosperous fortunes of the shoemaker—dexterously dipped his conversation so as to include that hitherto ignoble person. But his replies were brief and cold, and on the entrance of the doctor's student, who was unusually inflated with great news—the musquito-net resumed its ancient effectiveness, and Gilbraith, the transitory man, was resolved once more into Shoe Pete.

"I say, Doc, what is it?" said one of the idlers, smelling the news afar off, "any thing new about that ere miss what was smuggled into the two-door house t'other night?"

"A few particulars have transpired," replied the student whom they called Doc, and sliding his legs apart, he thrust his hands deep in his pockets and waited to be questioned further.

"What miss?" "Which two-door

house?"—"Yon one with so many windows?" were a few of the twenty questions asked in a minute.

"He means the house with the two front doors into it, and the two stone chimbleys onto it—well one ov them chimbleys is false, and maybe there's someten else 'ats falsen an what the chimbley is, about that ere house—my daughter posted me up as we went to meetin' last night."

Having thus brought himself to a level in point of importance, with the young doctor, the Squire moved his hand graciously toward him, and abdicated in his favor. He, nevertheless, was slightly offended—he slid his legs a little farther apart, and said haughtily "that he didn't know that he could enlighten the fellers so well as Squire Bigsham." This obliged the Squire to make a humiliating confession—to say, in fact, that he "knew nothing except that a young woman, no better un what she ort to be, appearently, had been lately smuggled into the two-door house, and that the feller what brought her, had shortly afterward disappeared between two lights, leaving her with a limited amount of chink, and with no livin' soul to do for her, except the greenest kind of a green horn."

The shoemaker had lighted his tallow candle, and the squire his big lamp, for it had grown quite dark, and a sudden gust had just driven a dash of rain, mixed with yellow leaves, against the window. The door burst suddenly open, and a slender, freckle-faced girl, with blue eyes staring wide, and red hair flying in wild disorder, stood fronting the wondering group, and with many catchings of breath and earnest gesticulations, made known the facts that she lived with a lady "that was took awful sick—that she had been afther the ould dochther and the ould dochther wasn't in it, and she was afther the young dochther to come with her to the lady, who lived in the house beyant, wid the two doors—and the young dochther had a right to go wid her if he had any sowl."

"Hoorough!" shouted some of the rude fellows, "Go wid her, Doc! Why if the chap ain't a blushin' up to his eyes—thought he had more pluck."

And one of the most disreputable of the fellows seized his hat, and volunteered to accompany the frightened girl, asseverating that he himself was the young dochther.

All at once the shoemaker dashed aside the frail curtain, and with his eyes flashing fire, stood in the midst of the vulgar crew, almost erect.

"Whoever dares to lie further to this poor child, or to insult her in any way," he cried, "does it at his peril." And leaving the dastards dumb with astonishment, he motioned the girl to follow him, and without another word went out into the rain. Ten minutes afterward the old woman with whom he boarded, wrapt in shawls and bearing a lantern in her hand, was feeling her way through the wet weeds of an alley toward the old house with the two front doors.

Presently through the windows of an upper room, the curtains of which were carefully drawn, the lights were seen to shine, and shadows to pass, as if there was hurrying to and fro within, but the most watchful gossips could discern nothing more. Rumor had not exaggerated the truth—that night when the storm was loudest and the sky blackest, the poor young lady who had been a few days before cast helpless upon her own sad fortune, took in her trembling arms the unwelcome child that must bear witness to her frailty, through time as deathless as the years of God.

The little window by which the shoemaker worked looked toward the house with the two front doors, and often as he drew out his long threads, his eyes wandered that way, his own isolated condition quickened his sympathies for the young mother, at whom so many even of her own sex were ready to cast stones. Sewing and hammering and pegging, he dreamed a thousand dreams of improbable ways in which he might serve her, and as he took his walk to his evening meals he now and then went round by the lonesome house, and the oftener he took that road the shorter it appeared, until it seemed to him at last, as he climbed the weedy hill and crossed the bare common, only to pass that house, and hobble down the hill again, that he was taking the shortest way home.

So far from losing anything in the estimation of the young fellows who frequented the "office," by the spirit he manifested in defence of the poor girl and her mistress, he was thereby promoted to a considerably higher degree of importance, and it soon became a matter of no unfrequent occurrence for them to address directly to him such narratives

as involved the exhibition of what they esteemed the most admirable manly courage. But these polite attentions gained imperceptibly, if they gained at all, upon his kindly feeling, and a brief word, or a careless nod, was usually the only acknowledgment he made.

The squire's boots were a complete success, and served to give him at once the reputation of a "tip-top" shoemaker; but this was not enough to lift him out of the socket of obscurity in which he was sunken, and give him give anything like a desirable social position. But what was termed genteel patronage began to be extended to him, and by degrees he became known as *little* Gilbraith, and to be called Shoe Pete, only behind his back.

One evening when an importunate creditor presented himself to the squire, he suddenly turned round with the inquiry, "Mr. Gilbraith, could you make it convenient to lend me five dollars for a day or two?"

"Certainly, sir, with the greatest pleasure," replied the shoemaker, with a heartiness that he had never before been known to use, and opening a well-filled purse he presented the note.

As the squire went forward to receive it, the mosquito-net curtain intercepted his way, and with one dash of his great hand he swept it to the ground, with the outraged exclamation:—"What dingnation fool ever put this thing up here, anyhow!"

As may be supposed, it was never hung up again, and thus the line of demarcation between the "office" and the "shop," became somewhat wavering.

The yellow leaves were coming down in the fall rain, when the shoemaker invested his first earnings in the lot adjoining the market-house, in consequence of which the squire acknowledged his humanity, and when the Christmas snow hung its white garlands on the box along the clergyman's grounds, heaped higher the mounds in the graveyard, and lay all unbroken before the house with the two front doors, a bright tin sign bearing the name of Peter Gilbraith, between two gilt boots, was nailed on the office door in close proximity to the squire's letter-box, and an apprentice had been taken into the shop, and with this assistance the young shoemaker found it difficult to fill his orders

"I think I will not go to supper to-

night," he said to his apprentice one evening, as the last sunlight glittered on the snow that hung over the eaves of the house with two doors. There was a great deal of work to be finished that night, and he had just lifted his hand to draw the curtain across the little window, preparatory to lighting the candle, when a new and joyous light came suddenly into his eyes, and leaving the curtain undrawn, he leaned his face against the window for some minutes, and said at length with a changed tone and manner: "I believe I will go after all."

The next minute the apprentice looked out, and was surprised to see him going up the hill through the unbroken snow, directly away from the house of the old woman with whom he took his meals. He did not see the house with the two front doors—much less the young woman at the window, holding a little child in her arms, and trying to make it see the sun go down, and if he had, he would have been just as much at a loss to know why Peter walked that way, and indeed that young man might have found it difficult to explain the puzzle himself.

"I never saw his lameness interfere so little with his walking, as it seems to now, in spite of the snow," mused the apprentice, and he drew the curtain, and lighted the candle.

The snow hung in a great roll over the top of the stone chimney, unstained and unmelted. "There is no fire below," thought Peter, and he sighed.

"Perhaps it is the woman's black hair that makes her face look so pale," he thought, as walking slowly, he gazed upon her, but suggestions of scanty fare would not be silenced, and he sighed again, and walked more slowly than before. Just then the little child thrust its naked arms from out the ragged blanket in which it was wrapt, and began to cry bitterly.

Peter stopped and stood still. In spite of the tender coaxings and cooings of the woman, which Peter could hear from where he stood, the child cried more and more bitterly. Moved by a sudden impulse, he walked directly to the door nearest to which the woman stood. She saw him, and opened it at once, with an air of such modest sweetness, as caused him to take off his hat—a civility he had never shown to anybody since coming to the village until then.

There was no fire, sure enough, and

the other evidences of comfort were all as meagre as imagination could have pictured them. She hesitated for a moment when the young woman paused, as if expecting him to make known his errand, but charity is never long in suiting means to ends, and he replied to her silence that he was in need of a person to bind shoes, and not knowing where to seek with the hope of success, had ventured to inquire of whom ever he chanced to see.

Before he had spoken half-a-dozen words, the baby lifted its head from its mother's shoulder, and with tears in its bright wondering eyes, remained looking at him, perfectly quiet—one dimpled shoulder peeping from the ragged blanket above, and two little bare feet, blue with cold, dangling below.

Is it any wonder if Peter took both those little feet in his great hand, and tried to warm them, under the pretence of seeing whether he had ever made so small a shoe?

When he returned to his shop that night, he found two young women, one of them the squire's daughter, waiting to have measures for shoes taken.

They whispered and laughed with one another, not a little rudely, the shoemaker thought, as he was getting ready his measure, and their orders were given in a manner that certainly bordered upon insolence—the squire's daughter was especially presumptuous and troublesome.

She doubted very much whether he would be able to suit her at all, she said, as she tossed her golden curls from her fire-red cheeks; but she should not hesitate to send him back twenty pairs of shoes, if he failed so many times to please her—it was so hard to make *such* people understand what one wanted—and with this little indication of her superiority and wilfulness, and with an indignant fling of her flounced skirt, she withdrew without so much as the slightest bend of her pretty neck.

But Mr. Gilbraith gave little attention to her saucy airs—his thoughts were too busy with the pale-faced mother, and her shivering baby.

When spring came two more lots were added to the first one, and the prosperous shoemaker built himself a fine new shop with a great square show-window, and a sign almost as big as the squire's front door. And as a finishing stroke of finery, there was an imported carpet on the floor,

and three yellow windsor chairs for the accommodation of the ladies.

He was called Mr. Gilbraith almost altogether, and his store was the fashionable one of the place; and when a brick pavement was laid down in front of the door and an awning stretched above it, that direction became the exclusive promenade, and every day, after sunset some twenty or thirty young women were to be seen tripping over the pavement, and turning their faces away from the window, of course. And last and first and oftenest, the squire's daughter was sure to go by, and more than any one else she stopped to examine the slippers in the window, at which times she took occasion to toss her curls coquettishly, and smile in a most bewitching fashion. But the shoemaker worked on at these times just as if her pretty face was not at the window, and stimulated by his indifference she stepped into the shop one evening and inquired the price of a pair of slippers which she said had taken her fancy. He replied without so much as glancing toward her. "I should like to have them fitted," she said, with a little more deference in her tone than she had hitherto used, and sitting down in the yellow windsor chair, she extended her little foot. The young man motioned his apprentice to wait upon the lady, but she would not be thus defeated. "They don't please altogether," she said, "perhaps it is the fault of the fitting—will you be kind enough to give me your opinion, Mr. Gilbraith." It was the tone rather than the words that elicited the young man's attention. He laid aside his work, and shaking back his curls with a grace of artlessness surpassing art, came forward, the faint color of his face heightened for the moment to a flush of confusion that made him positively handsome. The young lady thought so, and apologized for the trouble she was making. He was not used to such deference, and as he fitted the slipper, held the little foot in his hand longer than need were. "There! that is perfect," exclaimed the beauty, referring to the slipper.

"It is the foot that makes the shoe look so well," he replied; "shall I send them home for you?"

O no! the beauty would not give him so much trouble, she was already greatly obliged—and with a bright smile and a low courtesy that seemed to say she was receiving a favor, took the parcel in her white hand and was just stepping from

the door as a pale young woman, with a bundle of shoes in one arm and a child hanging over her shoulder, came in.

All women love babies—the squire's daughter was no exception; and with an ingenuous exclamation of delight she stopped, took the rosy face of the little one between her hands and kissed eyes and mouth and cheeks, prattling the while, in such a pretty way as went straight to the heart of the mother, and made a softer impression on the shoemaker than all her coquettish arts could ever have done, for some strange affinity had drawn him toward that little helpless creature from the dawn of its unfortunate existence. It often happened thereafter that when the village beauty passed the shoemaker's shop, he was at the door or window, and gradually the exchange of the evening salutation began to be looked to by both as the event of the day.

All the summer long the pale face was seen at the window of the house with the two front doors, and late into the night the candle would shine on the tired fingers that were always busy binding shoes. The path up the hill from the shoe-shop to the door was worn quite distinctly along the sod, and the shoemaker was observed to walk along it very frequently—more frequently the neighbors thought, than business required.

Meantime the baby grew more and more in the affection of the young shoemaker, and he would often take with him when he went to the house, a flower or an apple or some other trifle to please her baby eyes, and she would reach her hands up to be taken on his knee, and he would bend his head and allow her to make playthings of his curls, at will. No wonder she grew fond of him and learned to clap her hands and crow when she saw him, for is it not true that Providence "creates the love to reward the love?" And when this little child had found access to his heart it became gradually more accessible to others, for the humanizing influence of love even for a flower or a dumb animal, is beyond calculation. Like the dew and the rain that help to mould the dust into the rose, it falls into the desert of life, and straightway a garden is produced.

Everybody said, "What a change has come over Gilbraith—he is not the Shoe Pete he used to be at all," but no one dreamed what had wrought the change.

And the summer went by, and the

bright leaves fell on the brighter head of the little girl as the shoemaker tugged her about among the hollyhocks and poppies of the dooryard.

The house with the two front doors had a smoke in its chimney all that winter, and the gossips said the mistress of it was binding the shoemaker's heart as well as his shoes, but the wisest gossips are at fault, sometimes.

It was the week before Christmas and the pale-faced shoe-binder was at her work, paler and perhaps more melancholy than usual, for it was hard to get along at the best, and it was now mid-winter, and her health, less robust than it used to be, was scarcely equal to the demands upon it.

Little Orphie, for so the fatherless child had been named, had learned to lisp, "mother," but she called that name less often than Gabriel, as she persisted in designating Mr. Gilbraith. She had fallen asleep in his arms, and her upturned face seemed asking to be kissed as her bright little head rested against his bosom. He pulled down her coarse scanty dress, for her bare legs dangled out of it, and said, speaking partly to himself and partly to the child, "Next birthday little Orphie shall have a new dress, bright as the poppies she likes so much."

Perhaps it was the allusion to her birthday that awoke in the mind of the mother unwelcome memories, for throwing down her work with angry haste, she laid the child in the cradle, and with a scornful flush on her cheek removed it from the warmth of the firelight into the darkest corner of the room.

"What did you do that for?" asked the shoemaker with both authority and displeasure in his tone.

"What right have you to dictate in reference to *my* child?" she replied, and resumed her work with an averted face.

"The right which my love for her gives me," he said in a tone very gentle and winning.

The mother's heart was touched, and hiding her face in her hands she burst into tears—poverty, shame, pride, and sorrow, had produced a momentary feeling of kindness even for her child, but the next instant she was humbly and heartily repentant.

"I wish I was dead," she sobbed, at length, "or that I never had been born—that would be better—nobody cares for

me in the world, and even you are stealing from me the heart of my child!"

The young man was making some tender apology to the effect that it was through the child's heart that he had hoped ultimately to reach the mother's, when a loud knock on the door arrested the attention of both parties, and caused the baby to sit suddenly upright, and stare wonderingly about.

"You may bring her cradle back where it was," said the mother softly, and hastily brushing the tears away she opened the door with a smile that changed to an expression of pleased surprise when she saw that the visitor was Squire Bigsham.

"You need not trouble yourself about the cradle," she said, almost coldly, and aside, as it were, to the shoemaker, and from that moment, gave her undivided attention to the more distinguished guest.

When Mr. Gilbraith return home he found a dainty little note awaiting him—Miss Bigsham presented her compliments and begged the honor of Mr. Gilbraith's company on Christmas Eve.

"By George! but she's the prettiest girl what's in this town!" exclaimed the apprentice, as he presented the note, and he added, as he saw the smile on his employer's face, "I cut the best piece of ribbon in the store to make rosettes to put onto her shoes!"

"Quite right," replied Mr. Gilbraith, and refolding the note, he placed it carefully in his vest pocket.

The following evening the mistress of the house with the two front doors failed to return her work, as usual—the next day the apprentice was sent for it, and received the answer that it was not yet completed. Among the rest were a pair of slippers for Miss Bigsham. They must be sent home before the Christmas Eve, and having waited as long as he could, Mr. Gilbraith went himself, and in a mood less amiable than common. Not a stitch had been set in the slippers, and the fingers that should have done that work were busy making a shirt for Squire Bigsham.

The shoemaker was angry, but his first expression of displeasure was arrested by little Orphie who clung to his knees, saying, "Gabriel, Gabriel," in her almost wild delight. He stooped and kissed her, and without another word left the house.

Christmas Eve saw him at Squire Bigsham's, and no one of all the gay assem-

bly so much honored by the Squire's beautiful daughter as he. She was noted for her graceful dancing, but that night she preferred, strangely enough, her friends thought, more quiet amusements. Mr. Gilbraith, however, was not ignorant of the fact that his inability to dance influenced her preference, nor could he remain quite insensible to that preference, for Miss Bigsham was the admiration of the village and he to whom she extended her lightest favor was deemed fortunate indeed. Pride has more authority in matters of love than we are apt to believe, and the shoemaker's heart had its share of vanity and weakness.

Many a night after that, when he had been passing the evening with the Squire's daughter, he would go home by the way of the house with the two front doors, and sometimes linger a long time watching the lights as they moved about, and sighing regretfully; for the breach created between him and the pale-faced young woman on the occasion of the Squire's first visit to her was destined never to close up, and be as it was before. Little Orphie, however, did not share in the alienation, and when her birthday came round, true to his promise, he gave her the new dress red as it could be, and exceedingly beautiful in her eyes.

"You had better give it to the great beauty who has made you so blind to everybody else," said Orphie's mother ungraciously.

"Why do you decline to say Miss Bigsham?" answered the shoemaker, "for doubtless it is she to whom you allude—surely that name is not so obnoxious to you."

A conversation beginning thus, was not likely to end in a more agreeable state of feeling than had previously existed, and from that day the old breach was visibly widened, and the intercourse between the lovers, for such they had really been, was restricted entirely to the shoe-binding.

Once, indeed, afterward, he knocked on one of the two doors with the express design of humbling all his pride, and expressing fully the sentiment which needed not the warranty of expression, but when the door was opened by the hand of Squire Bigsham his tenderness and courage received together a stroke from which they never recovered.

The springtime that was just beginning to bud in his nature, was blighted—he

withdrew into himself, and suffered the old hardness and indifference to divide him from men and women again.

The squire's daughter lost her brief power, and though she tried to cover her discomfort with gayety and flirtation, she steadily refused all offers of marriage, and the roses died out of her cheeks, one by one.

When five years were gone her curls were put plainly away, and she was grown as quiet and reserved, almost as the shoemaker himself, with whom meantime the world had continued to prosper, and he was become one of the richest and most influential of the citizens among whom he lived, for the little town where he settled had grown to a city.

Little Orphie was big enough now to bring and carry work to and from her mother's house; every day she was seen tripping down the hill with a bundle in her arm, and every day the shoemaker kissed her and called her his little sunbeam, and so she was in fact, for she lighted his lonesome life more than anything else.

The squire's daughter and he had been almost estranged for the last year. One day to his surprise she came to see him; her face pale and her eyes swollen from weeping—her father was about to be married, she said, to the woman who lived in the house with the two front doors—she could never be reconciled to such a marriage, and was about to leave her native home to make room for the intruder, and she could not go away without seeing Mr. Gilbraith once more, and feeling that they parted good friends. Her trembling voice and wet cheeks told how bitter, at best, that parting must be; suffice it that it never came about, and that instead, she became in due course of time, the mistress of a fine house of her own, and the wife of Mr. Gilbraith.—Everybody envied the couple and thought them very happy, and so perhaps they were; nevertheless the husband had his fits of melancholy, and had, it was reported, a room set apart in his fine house where he was accustomed to retire for hours together, during which times even his beautiful wife was excluded from his sympathy.

The house with the two front doors was deserted, and when Squire Bigsham's wife sat in the front pew of the church, or invited her friends to dine, it was no longer remembered that she had ever lived there in neglect and poverty.

When little Orphie was sick, Mrs. Gilbraith went home, and when she died Mrs. Bigsham shook hands with Mrs. Gilbraith, and in the child's grave all unfriendly feeling was buried.

When Peter Gilbraith, junior, was christened, there was a great merry-making at Squire Bigsham's, and when he was six years old there was no boy to be found who had so fine a beauty and so manly a courage as he. It was the autumn of that year, a rainy night, and the yellow leaves were coming down with every gust. Mr. and Mrs. Gilbraith sat chatting before a little fire, very happily, and making plans for the celebration of their wedding day. Little Peter was playing in the room specially dedicated to his father,—he was fond of being there because it was a liberty not often granted him. Suddenly he came staggering toward his parents—his eyes staring wide, and his face white as it could be. As soon as he could speak he said that while he was at play, a little girl wearing a red dress came to him and kissed him, and that when he spoke to her she turned into a shadow. The anniversary celebration was talked of no more that night.

## BODY AND SOUL.

BY METTA VICTORIA VICTOR.

A LIVING soul came into the world—  
Whence came it? Who can tell?  
Or where that soul went forth again,  
When it bade the world farewell?

A body it had, this spirit new,  
And the body was given a name,  
And chance and change and circumstance  
About its being came.  
Whether the name would suit the soul  
The givers never knew—  
Names are alike, but never souls:  
So body and spirit grew,  
Till time enlarged their narrow sphere  
Into the realms of life.  
Into this strange and double world,  
Whose elements are at strife.

'Twere easy to tell the daily paths  
Walked by the body's feet,  
To mark where the sharpest stones were laid,  
Or where the grass grew sweet;  
To tell if it hungered, or what its dress,  
Ragged, or plain, or rare;  
What was its forehead—what its voice,  
Or the hue of its eyes and hair.

But these are all in the common dust;  
And the spirit—where is it?  
Will any say if the hue of the eyes,  
Or the dress, for that was fit?

Will any one say what daily paths  
That spirit went or came—  
Whether it rested in beds of flowers,  
Or shrunk upon beds of flame?  
Can any one tell, upon stormy nights,  
When the body was safely at home,  
Where, amid darkness, terror, and gloom,  
Its friend was wont to roam?  
Where, upon hills beneath the blue skies,  
It rested soft and still,  
Flying straight out of its half-closed eyes,  
That friend went wandering at will?

High as the bliss of the highest heaven,  
Low as the lowest hell,  
With hope and fear it winged its way  
On a journey that none may tell.

It lay on the rose's fragrant breast,  
It bathed in the ocean deep,  
It sailed in a ship of sunset cloud,  
And it heard the rain-cloud weep.  
It laughed with maids in murmurous caves,  
It was struck by the lightning's flash,  
It drank from the moonlit lily-cup,  
It heard the iceberg's crash.

It haunted places of old renown,  
It basked in thickets of flowers;  
It fled on the wings of the stormy wind,  
It dreamed through the star-lit hours.  
Aha! a soul's strange history  
Never was written or known,  
Though the name and age of its earthly part  
Be graven upon the stone!

It hated, and overcame its hate—  
It loved to youth's excess—  
It was mad with anguish, wild with joy,  
It had visions to grieve and to bless;  
It drank of the honey-dew of dreams,  
For it was a poet true;  
Secrets of nature and secrets of mind,  
Mysteriously it knew.

Should mortals question its history,  
They would ask if it had gold—  
If it bathed and floated in deeps of wealth—  
If it traded, and bought, and sold.  
They would prize its worth by the outward dress  
By which its body was known:  
As if a *soul* must eat and sleep,  
And live on money alone!

It had no need to purchase lands,  
For it owned the whole broad earth;  
'Twas of royal rank, for all the past  
Was its by right of birth.  
All beauty in the world below  
Was its, by right of love,  
And it had a great inheritance  
In the nameless realms above.

It has gone! the soul so little known—  
Its body has lived and died—  
Gone from the world so vexing, small:  
But the Universe is wide!